



FACT SHEET

Direct to Sailor (DTS)



Based upon a desire to better serve and improve the quality of life of Sailor and Marines serving the United States on board U.S. Navy ships, American Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) and the Naval Media Center (NMC) initiated studies in 1995 to determine the feasibility of providing full-time, satellite delivered television services directly to Navy ships worldwide.

Full operational capability for the Direct to Sailor (DTS) satellite system was reached on 23 December 1997 with the activation of three transponders on Intelsat (and now SES New Skies) platforms for the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific Ocean Regions. Using global, premium transponders, these three satellites provide DTS with almost complete coverage of all oceans and seas where U.S. Navy ships operate.

The initial DTS service was received by twenty large platforms (aircraft carriers, amphibious, and command ships) already equipped with three-meter television receive-only (TVRO) satellite antennas. A standard DTS TVRO terminal system was procured by the Naval Space and Warfare Systems (SPAWARS) command. Initial installations began during the 1st Quarter FY 99. All DTS program ships (except new construction) had their terminals installed and operational by the end of FY 02. There are presently 138 Navy ships, 45 MSC and six Coast Guard ships with DTS.

The TV-DTS services consist of three channels of television, AFN DTS Pacific or AFN DTS Atlantic depending on where the ship is deployed, AFN DTS news, and AFN DTS sports, three radio services, and a data channel. NMC operates a full-time DTS control room at the AFRTS Broadcast Center, Riverside, California. Through this facility, Defense Media Activity-Anacostia inserts Navy Department unique information programming in the DTS programming services.

The DTS radio services consist of two monaural music channels with rotating blocks of U.S. produced satellite programming in the Rock, Top-40, Oldies, Country, and Urban musical formats along with hourly news and sports information. The third radio service is the AFRTS Interruptible Voice Channel, a full-time news and information service consisting of a representative mix of the most popular radio services from all of the major U.S. radio networks.

The DTS data channel provides Sailor and Marines on board Navy ships with U.S., DoD and Navy print products. These include: N.Y. Times Fax and Business Update; daily Stars & Stripes LT (the eight page version of daily Stars and Stripes newspaper); the DoD "Early Bird"; the NavNews (message); CHINFO Clips; DTS weekly schedules and, other Navy internal information products.

The Scientific-Atlanta PowerVu receiver/decoders for the DTS service are provided by AFRTS and the U.S. Navy to U.S. Navy ships. Since DTS also reaches land areas beyond the AFRTS SATNET footprints, AFRTS provides receiver/decoders to remote land based sites where U.S. military members are stationed.

Worldwide, the TV-DTS service can be received with a TVRO antenna as small as 1.2 meters but the AFRTS recommended TVRO antenna size is 1.5 to 1.8 meters, if the larger size antenna can be accommodated at the site.

USS Ships should refer all questions concerning the satellite dish and the antenna control unit (ACU) to their Regional Maintenance Center (RMC). For questions concerning below deck DTS support equipment USS ships should contact their local Navy Fleet Support Detachment (FSD). Questions concerning future installation of shipboard DTS equipment on USS Navy Ships should be referred to SPAWARS Systems Service Center, San Diego (SSC – San Diego). MSC and US Coast Guard Ships should contact their Port Engineer for any questions concerning the DTS satellite dish and it's ACU. For questions concerning the below deck supportive equipment they should contact their local NMC FSD for support and/or SITE for equipment exchanges. For any future installation questions contact DMA Anacostia Afloat Engineering Division, Washington DC

